FAQs for professional editors

A student has approached me to edit their thesis. What is the scope of services I can legitimately provide?

You should be familiar with the guidelines, 'The editing of research theses by professional editors', which provide information on the scope and limit of editing services you can legitimately provide. Services you may provide in editing research theses are limited to copyediting and proofreading. Refer to *Australian standards for editing practice* for clarification on these (Introduction, 'The fundamentals of editing', and Parts D and E). You should also check with students whether their institution requires editing in hard-copy or onscreen.

What is *Australian standards for editing practice*?

The standards were first devised by the Standards Working Group of the Council of Australian Societies of Editors (CASE), forerunner of the Institute of Professional Editors Limited, the national peak body for Australian editors; approved by the members of all Australian societies of editors; ratified by CASE; and published in 2001. The standards were developed for editors to use as a basis for judging the comprehensiveness of their own knowledge and skills when promoting themselves and the editing profession generally.

The second edition of the *Standards* was published in 2013, after many months of consultation between IPEd's member societies, ratification by IPEd Council and approval from the societies' members. The structure of the revised edition remains unchanged, although content has been updated to reflect current practice and terminology. The second edition also includes a revised preface, a new introduction, which describes the fundamentals of editing and the role of editors, and a glossary.

I will be editing the thesis in hard copy. What do I need to bear in mind?

Students should provide you with a clean copy of their thesis. They should also provide you with any style guide, manual or other guidelines to which the thesis is required to conform.

You should outline your specific requirements of students' role during the editing process. Most importantly, you should remind students that they are responsible for reviewing each change or correction suggested before accepting it.

If you identify any problems in matters of substance or structure, you should not correct these, but alert students to them. You may wish to provide students with examples of how to resolve errors of substance or structure. You should keep all versions of the marked-up hard copy.

I will be editing the thesis onscreen. What do I need to bear in mind?

Students should provide you with a clean copy of their thesis. They should also provide you with any style guide, manual, or other guidelines to which the thesis is required to conform. You should outline any specific requirements of students' role during the editing process.

Most importantly, you should remind students that they are responsible for reviewing each change or correction suggested before accepting it. This is particularly important when working with onscreen copy (when it is very easy for students simply to accept all suggested changes without checking them individually). Ideally, text marked up onscreen should be returned to the student in PDF format so that students are required to consider each suggested editorial change.

If you identify any problems in matters of substance or structure, you should not correct them. However, you may choose to alert students to them and provide examples of how they might be resolved. You should keep all versions of the marked-up onscreen copy.